

#Appliance Reviews

Top-Load vs. Front-Load Washers – What's best for your home

John Carey | Nov 22, 2018 | 6 min read

**VS**

Ever since front-load washing machines made a comeback in the late 90's, consumers around the world have been struggling with deciding what kind of washing machine is better: the new high efficiency front-load washing machines or the traditional top-loading washing machines. Washing machines are a necessity in most households, and buyers are always looking for ways to ensure that they are getting what they pay for.

Top Load Washers vs. Front Load Washers (8 Factors to Consid...



Here at [Designer Appliances, New Jersey & New York's premier appliance store](#), we know how hard it can be to find trusted guidance when selecting new appliances. This article will help you navigate between the differences in top-loading washing machines and front-loading washing machines so that you can buy the best option for you.

8 factors to consider when selecting between top load and front load

Choosing between a top load and front load washer can be a very personal choice. We think you should make your selection based on the following performance factors:

1) Which is easier to use?



Top-loading washers are normally more convenient since you don't have to bend over to load and unload clothes. For older buyers and those with joint issues, top-loading washers typically stand at an ideal height to save the trouble of bending down. To mitigate this issue with front loaders we recommend installing the units on laundry pedestals that raise the units about 12-15". Top loaders also have other convenient qualities, such as the ability to add clothes in mid-cycle, or even right after starting the cycle. Because the door doesn't lock, if a sock is forgotten in the clothes basket, then it's easy to add to a top-loading washer. Top-loading washers can also collect lint and distribute fabric softener better than front-loading washing machines can.

Winner: Top-Load Washers**2) How quickly do they wash?**

Top-loading washers with an agitator tend to wash clothes faster than front-loading washing machines since, making them ideal for buyers who are on the go. The main reason for this is because clothes are constantly immersed in water in a top load washer.

The exception to the rule: Agitator vs. Impeller**AGITATOR****IMPELLER**

*Note that not all top loaders are same. Today, there are two main types of top-loading washing machines, one that has an agitator and one that does not. An agitator is a mechanism within a washer that creates motion by shaking and forcing water through the machine, leading to a vibrating washing machine. Top-

loading washing machines with agitators typically wash quicker, but top-loading washing machines without agitators (known as high-efficiency top load washing machine) clean better, can clean more clothes at once, and use less water. As such, HE (high-efficiency) washing machines cost more.

Winner: Top-Load Washers

3) Which cleans better?



Despite being easier on your back, top-loading washers can also be rougher on clothes, especially if the machine is overloaded. Front loaders are much gentler with clothes. Top-loaders also have a difficult time washing larger items, such as pillows or comforters, as they won't fully immerse in the water.

Winner: Front-Load Washers

4) Price

Front-loading washers are typically more expensive, but justifiably so. Front-loading washers give a more quality clean and are more energy and water efficient than top loaders. Americans second biggest water expense comes from washing machines, and front-loading washers can cut this cost down. Even average, front-loading washing machines use 40% less water than the average top-loading washing machine, according to TXU Energy. Consumers Reports also consistently rate front-loading washers higher "excellent" and "very good" compared to top-loaders normally being rated "poor" or "fair." Although the upfront cost of a front loader is more, we think over the long run this total expense evens out.

Winner: Draw

5) Which uses less water?



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Winner: Front-Load Washers

6) Installation Flexibility



Front-loading washing machines have the ability to be stacked with a dryer, using up less space than a top-loading dryer for consumers in smaller spaces. There are two popular reasons why users decide to go with a stacked washer-dryer layout. The first is that they have no other choice—many homes or rental units have their laundry sets located in small closets where vertical space is the only space available. But even those who have additional space are opting to go

vertical because it allows them more functional floor space that can be used for storage or left open for a clutter-less appeal.

In many homes, space, among other details, are a major deciding factor when choosing a washer and dryer. If you have limited space or an unusual set up, be sure to refer to our post on [compact washers and dryers](#).

Gone are the days when consumers and homeowners are constricted to the builder-grade laundry centers that are immovable and space-hogging. As vertically stacked arrangements have become more popular, nearly all washers and dryers being manufactured are built to have stacking compatibility. Even the largest units which might seem un-stackable are being produced with vertical stacking capability as a key feature.

Winner: Front-Load Washers

7) Spin speed



During the final spin cycle, front-loading washing machines generally spin about 33% faster than typical top loaders, meaning that more water will be removed from the clothes before you transfer them to the dryer. This means your clothes will dry faster in the dryer and will be less heavy to move between the two units. One drawback however is that the spin cycle causes many front-loading washers to vibrate, making noise that many people would rather avoid.

Winner: Front-Load Washers

8) The smell/mold issue



One of the biggest complaints about front-loading washers is that over time mold can buildup around the door's rubber gasket. To combat this, front-loading washers require a lot more maintenance than top-loading washers. Top-loading washing machines don't have this issue since they rely on gravity to pull water down, so water doesn't get trapped in any seals.

Winner: Top-Load Washers

So what's the bottom line?

Front-loading washers are generally better than top-loading washers. Front-loading washers are more energy and water efficient and give a better clean compared the top-loading washers. However, front-loading washers are more expensive than top-loading washers. Top-loading washers are also more convenient and easier on the buyer than front-loading washers.

For buyers who are looking for a quicker and easier wash, top-loading washing machines are probably a better way to go. While they initially save money, top-loading washers will cost more money in bills than a front-loading washing machine will. For buyers in a smaller space with more money to invest initially, front-loading washers are better and will provide a better clean while taking up less space.

Shopping for a washing machine ultimately comes down to what you personally are looking for. While front-loading washers are typically the way to go, there are some downfalls that can lead someone to purchasing a top-loading washer. As washing machines are being made with cheaper plastic parts compared to what they used to be made of, both types of washers will need repairs just as often as the other.



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**Jinmichigan** • 7 months ago

Funny, the top loader was better in most categories except quality clean, whatever that is. Yet you pick front loaders as better. Hmm. Don't see the logic there.

1 ^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ›

**Trent Vesterson** → Jinmichigan • 7 months ago

Funny, you miscounted. Top won three categories, front won four categories. There was one draw.

4 ^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ›

**Advaidhya Tiwari** → Trent Vesterson • 2 months ago

Top load won where it was needed whereas front load won in useless categories like spin speed, installation flexibility etc.

^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ›

**Jimmesota** → Advaidhya Tiwari • a month ago

Front won better clean.... which is the only one that matters.... so....

^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ›

**Advaidhya Tiwari** → Jimmesota • a month ago

That is incorrect. Front load does not clean better. Top load cleans better as it uses more water. Front load only dries better

^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ›



Amarachi Moses • 20 days ago

Wow. Awesome post. i like the analysis. i wrote posts on fully automatic washing machine and top loader vs front loader. Check them out here:<https://bestappliancedeal.b...> and <https://bestappliancedeal.b...>

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Margaret Glendinning • a month ago

One of the main issues that isn't addressed is wash temperature. I lived overseas for 24 years- in Europe and Asia- ALL machines are front load, most are in your kitchen under the counter. Since there is only the cold water line attached they have a heating element included in the design and you choose the wash temperature for the items being cleaned. This gives you a consistent wash/clean every load. In America, you run hot and cold lines to the machine. So after everyone showers and the hot water tank is cold, try doing your warm/hot wash cycles. They don't come out clean at all. Depending on how far your laundry is from the water tank you will still get cold water in the hot line. American washers are really poorly designed in this manner. When washing machines companies wake up and decide to include a heating element to boost water temp so that they are consist regardless of the temp intake they will consistently get mixed results and poor ratings on clean standards overall. It's not rocket science.

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Cody Pomeroy • 6 months ago

Top load laundry are better for me anyway!

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